



Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR


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MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: David Lurie, Director 

DATE: September 25, 2009

SUBJECT: Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department Selected as Beta Test Site for National Public Health Voluntary Accreditation

We have received official notification that the Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department (HHSD) is one of 19 local health departments selected nationwide, the only one in Texas, to participate as a beta test site for the voluntary public health accreditation program being developed by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). Three tribal health departments and eight state health departments were also selected.

Participation in the beta test will provide on-the-ground, critical feedback needed to revise and refine the accreditation program prior to the national launch in 2011. From now until the end of 2010, HHSD will work with PHAB through the accreditation process and provide feedback for the formulation of the accreditation process and practical application at the local level. It will provide HHSD a systematic means of evaluating our local public health department and identifying opportunities for quality improvement and service enhancement. The technical assistance, the self-assessment tool, and the required feedback documentation will provide an objective department-wide opportunity to improve organizational capabilities and development of policies and protocols related to the delivery of essential public health services.

We are honored to have been selected as a test site by the PHAB. It is an opportunity to provide valuable input to the PHAB which could be of great benefit to our colleagues in local public health and to the communities we serve. HHSD will be in a position to successfully complete the application process for full accreditation in 2011.

We appreciate your support as we move through these next 15 months and we will provide you updates on our progress as appropriate. Should you like additional information, please contact my office at 972-5010, or Shannon Jones, HHSD Assistant Director for Public Health and Community Services, who will be serving as the department-designated accreditation coordinator. He can be reached at 972-5416.

cc: Marc A. Ott, City Manager
H.G. (Bert) Lumbreras, Assistant City Manager
Shannon Jones, HHSD Asst. Director